Friday 19th March

Module 5 Seminar A

RICHARD: Good morning everyone, I was muting myself then. It's me Richard Rieser, General Secretary, welcome you all and Sarah Kamau who will say a word in a moment. We have just the two of us presenting today but we have got a number of people presenting on film as well as part of it. Our theme in this seminar is livelihood and employment. So I am just going to put up the PowerPoint so we can start with that. And ok.

    So as I said, improving livelihood and employment and Sarah and myself and we'll be doing I think three interactive chat sessions where you will get a chance to participate but I am also going to be taking you through some graphics which I will do audio description of in some detail. So over to you Sarah to introduce this seminar.

SARAH: Thank you Richard, hello everybody. I want to welcome you to this seminar once again, to go through this module today, and we thank you for your resilience and being here even as far as this module is concerned and we hope that you continue to the end. In the introduction I am going to talk about disabled people in all countries as especially in low middle‑income countries, are likely to be found amongst the poorest which is a vicious cycle, barriers of exclusion, isolation, and lack of education training, work or livelihood reinforce the disadvantage person position, disabled people experience. Governments to abide by the treaties they have signed and ratified such as the UNCRPD, Article 27, and the Sustainable Development Goals 8, have legislate provide welfare, education, training, raise awareness and ensure employers including themselves are effectively addressing barriers to equalise the position of disabled people. The laws of livelihood to individuals and to the economies of their countries, by the non‑engagement of disabled people is both an ongoing human rights abuse and an economic loss. for countries. Next.

    A sense of achievement is important, to all human beings and we know that with reasonable accommodation and support, disabled employees are as productive and effective as anyone and are often even more reliable than non‑disabled employees. Microfinance and organisations like co‑operatives in agriculture and other self‑employed activities, alongside assistive devices can make all the difference to self‑employed people and their families. As we demonstrate all arguments and barriers that hinder the employment of disabled people can be addressed and the action marks to address the current employment gaps and challenges are well‑known, and have been shown to be effective. What is needed is a major renewed effort on behalf of State Parties, employers and civil societies to implement the commitment already made.

RICHARD: Thank you. Now you're going to tell us about language.

SARAH: Now I will talk about the language that CDPF use for us to be able to conceptualise why we use 'disabled people' instead of 'people with disabilities'. I am saying that disabled people, why we choose to call ourselves disabled people as CDPF, in the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum we call ourselves disabled people because of the development of the social model of disability. In the 19th and the 20th century, a person's medical condition was thought to be the root cause of their exclusion from society. An approach now referred to as the 'medical or individual model' of disability. We use the social model of disability where the barriers of environment, attitude and organisation are what disable people with impairments and lead to prejudice and discrimination. So to call ourselves persons with disabilities is to accept that we are objects and powerless. We also view ourselves as united by a common oppression so are proud and to identified as disabled people rather than persons with disabilities. But when we're talking about the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities we shall use the term people or persons with disabilities. I hope you understood.

RICHARD: Thank you very much Sarah. I am going to start, we had a film in the presentation which I hope you have all viewed, talking about poverty and disability being in a vicious cycle, and the outside ring here you have got disability, you have got poverty, then it goes round to vulnerability to poverty and ill‑health leads to more disability. And then an inner circle which is saying denial of opportunities for economic social and human development leads to deficits in economic social and cultural rights which leads to reduced participation in decision making, and denial of civil and political rights. Then goes on to social and cultural exclusion and stigma which then reinforces the denial of economic rights. The cycle according to this formulation from DFID works on two levels. We have to ask ourselves, are disabled people who are poor, so different from everybody else? And what about rich people who are disabled. Is a millionaire who has his own jet can afford to pay for a whole series of personal assistants, had adapted his house, say he is an ambulant impaired wheelchair user so he has electronic devices all over the house he can control, he also has a personal assistant to help him, how disabled is that person, how many barriers are they actually facing? And the reality is they are not facing that many barriers because disability is to do with the outside barriers. Of course they are still a person with impairment, and in the sense that they will be stigmatised by other people because they are in a wheelchair, he will still be disabled, but economically, that person won't necessarily be that disabled.

    So one has to question ‑

>>: THE INTERPRETER: Sorry I can't see the IS interpreter there, have you spotlighted the IS interpreter, Adam?

GEMMA: We don't spotlight Susan, can you just check your view?

>>: Right. Ok great.

RICHARD: Are we all right to go on? Ok. Let's have a look at the economic realities of the world a little bit because it will help to us see this in context. The first map that I have put up is the countries of the world and I will explain it in some detail for those who can't access the visual image, is the world in 2018 population which was 7.633 billion people. And the countries are drawn according to their population, so the size of the population rather than geographic map area. Instead the area of the country in roughly the same position as where they are, so China with 1.4 billion people is very large on the right‑hand side of the map, next to that Japan off the coast 127 million. Philippines, 106, Indonesia down below, 266 million. South‑east Asia got a number of countries there, Bangladesh quite large 166 million, India 1.354 billion and will overtake China in the next 4 years as the biggest in terms of population. Then Pakistan next to it. The number of countries very small in the Middle East and around there, and then Russia much smaller than we see it on the map where it stretches right across Asia and Europe, is 144 million and then we have got the various European countries group together in the middle, top part of the map Germany 82 million, France 65 million the UK66 million. Italy 59 million, Spain 46 million and down below that is Turkey. Then we go down to Africa, and it's relatively, it's just over 1.1 billion people altogether, but 195 million in Nigeria, 107 million Ethiopia and going down to South Africa 57 million. Congo quite large in the middle there 84 million, and Tanzania 59 million. So we cross over then to the Americas we have got very small Caribbean islands obviously because their populations are quite small, largest being Cuba with 11.5 million and then Jamaica with 2.9 million. But the US 326 million, Mexico 130 million then such smaller countries in the area there between Mexico and South America, where the largest is Brazil with 210 million the other much smaller, all drawn in proportion. That where the people are living in the world, and so is wealth equally distributed and I am sure you will all say no obviously it's not. That's why we have the phrase low and middle‑income countries but how big a difference is that? And this map which is shows two things, it shows the total amount of product as the sales of all products in that country called the gross domestic produced, so the country is drawn in sizes to gross domestic product, but then it's also coloured on a scale of 20 different colours from brown through maroon through to red, orange, yellow, light green, dark green, and blue, dark blue for who has the most money. So for instance, now we have a very different pattern, although China is quite large by standards it's, nowhere near as large as it was for population. India which is very large for population I much, much smaller in terms of gross domestic product. Japan which remember I said was offshore island, to challenge China is large because the income is large, as indeed South Korea is much larger than either it was my population or size. Australia down the bottom there which hardly figured in our population map is quite large, New Zealand which hardly figured at all with only 4.5 million is quite large as well. Then going on to Africa, we find that it's very small in terms with Nigeria having the biggest income followed by South African and Egypt and all the other countries much smaller, but they are all much, much smaller. So Africa is actually smaller than California, there's more income in California then the whole of Africa and the amount of income per person is the top band whereas most of Africa is in the reds and yellows. South Africa is the highest average personal income for capita income.

    Then we have got in Europe obviously you would expect them to be large those economies, and they are, and then over in America very large and each state is shown there and most of those states have a higher income tan most of the countries in the rest of world even though their populations are not that large. And then when we come down to middle America and south America and the Caribbean, it's all much, much smaller in terms of much smaller gross income and so on.

    Now 300 years ago, the income, a map of this income we didn't measure it in those days, would have been much more equal around the world, and what is interesting here is the difference that's happened. This has not happened by accident. This has happened by Imperial exploitation, or by Empire of these countries, then following decolonisation, we have had large companies taking over in what's often called neo‑colonialism, the big multi‑national companies like oil companies have taken over and really are making most of the running in terms of the economies and many of these country not necessarily in China which operates on a different system, but Russia recently came into this with closing down the state run monopolies and offering them out. But the income in terms of this map, we can see there's hardly any income showing here in Russia at all. Compared to other areas. So the market experiment in Russia has not led to an increase in gross domestic product and most people are very poor, or sort of medium to low brackets. Not as low as in the Indian subcontinent and Africa, but really much lower than anywhere in western Europe. That's the reality. So when we talk about a vicious cycle of poverty for disabled people, clearly the bottom line in Europe, UK, North America and Canada, Australia, New Zealand which it is going to be at a much higher level than in other places and it's important to get this into perspective when we're actually talking about disparity in income and I think it's a corrective to this idea that ... another map I have now put up this table of extreme poverty versus extreme wealth, how big is the inequality gap the world's richest 1% have more than twice as much wealth than the 6.9 billion people. Let's just let that sink in the world's richest 1% have more than twice as much wealth as 6.9 billion living in the world. Almost half of humanity is living on less than 5.50 dollars a day. So that is the average across the world. We can see very much skewed in the last 20 years as neo‑liberal economics has operated round the world which has basically made the rich, rich and the poor relatively poorer, although there has been an uplift about 500 million people from out of absolute poverty. What remains to be seen is if the COVID lockdown will push that half a billion people back into poverty, and many commentators think it will. We don't have data for the current period, the data that is up on this chart here which I will read through for each area, is for up to 2015/16 but it shows a series across the graph from Middle East. It shows three lines. The top line is light blue is the 1% of the wealthiest, how much proportion of the income they have, then the 10% where are they, and then the bottom 50%, a brown dotted line. You can see the income disparity, clearly if we a completely equal society we wouldn't have these disparities, and most people think that's not credible, but perhaps a ten‑fold gap might be credible for many people. But what we have got here is much, much more than that. So you can see the Middle East has not changed very much in the last 25 years, neither has Brazil but there are still gaps between the richest 1%, the 10% and the bottom 5% 50%. In India the bottom 50% have been coming down getting poorer from 1980 to 2013, the top 10% have been getting a lot richer going up very fast. The middle class or top half of the middle class they have been going up in line with top 1% but the majority of people have been getting poorer. In sub‑Saharan Africa a lot of countries from 1980 to 2016, it's been level‑pegging really across that period. The top 1% up there after well over 50% of the income, the next 10% above the bottom 50% but the bottom 50% have not been getting poorer which is interesting. Those statistics that say half a billion people came out of poverty are probably as much related to sub‑Saharan Africa as elsewhere, they are certainly not related to India where people have got poorer. The United States which is the richest country in world, you might think would but of course the distribution of income in the country has changed, there we see the same pattern, the bottom 50% getting poorer, the top 1% and the top 10% getting much richer. In Russia you see a dramatic drop then from the marketisation of the companies, with bottom 50% getting a lot poorer. It's stabilising at a much lower level going now slightly up towards 2015. And the top 10% going up and up with marketisation and dropping slightly in 2000 and stabilising in 2015 the top 1% massively up as companies were sold off to them for practically nothing and they become millionaires overnight and then it's sort of gone along at a higher level. China, which has had this huge economic growth in the world remember that 1.4 billion people so a very large portion of the world we there have China, the bottom 50% getting poorer, the top 1% getting a lot richer, and the top 10% at a much lower level, also getting richer. In Europe which as a block is richer than anywhere else, we would see that the top 1% have been slowly getting richer, the top 10% slowly getting richer and the bottom 50% more or less dropping in the 80s and 90s but now sort of stabilising throughout the period. France as an example of one European country the same pattern.

    That gives us something to think about now as we go on to looking at wealth across the world, disabled people in it. When disabled people living in poverty are asked what their most pressing needs are, the answers are rarely to do with their impairment specific needs, they are to do with I need decent housing, I need running water, I need food, I need schools for my children, I need education, I need training, I need a job. If you ask that question to most people living in the world who are poor you would get very similar answers. That's why a lot of writers and thinks have criticised this visual cycle of poverty for disabled people, saying how different it is for other people who are poor. So both disability and poverty are symptoms of the way the society is organised. Marginalising and isolating certain people. The poor and disabled people and of course often more proportionately women in that. Clearly not all disabled people are poor, and not all people, not all poor people are disabled. However, if there is such similarities between the characteristics of poverty on disabled people, not impairment, but remember it the barriers beyond the person we're looking at here with disability, then perhaps the relationship should be better described, rather than as a cycle, as interlocking circles. Social model we have talked about a lot tells us it's the structures in society that disable us. Therefore, disabled people need to be part of the wider movement for social justice and equality. In other words what this analysis is telling us, if we want to have greater equality, and disband the structures which disable us, we also have to be part of the wider movement in our countries, for more equality and more distribution of income, from the richest to the poorest. So this is being put forward as a different model, and here we have three circles and outside circle which is society, an inside circle which is saying marginalisation, isolation, economic social and political deprivation, lack of access to education, employment, healthcare, legal political processes, healthy food, adequate housing, credit. Now that's both for people living with a disability, or an impairment and those living with poverty. In other words it gives us a better and more accurate model and we thank Rebecca Yeo for developing this, of what is actually happening in world rather than this very simplistic cycle of disabled people getting poorer because it separates us. In fact it's not useful to do that, sometimes we have to argue as Disabled People's Organisation for the particular things that disable us and other times we have to argue with other groups who are fighting for greater social equality. What is true say is in the countries which have the greatest social equality, the Scandinavian countries, maybe Spain, Italy, Portugal, Canada, and New Zealand. What we find is in those countries, where there's greater equality and Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, that there is also a better deal for disabled people. In other words the fact of what's happening in the world is we can't win this on our own as disabled people, we have to be part of the wider social movement for dismantling the unequal society because it's only in that way that we're going to actually get a better deal for ourselves.

    So a couple of examples of people who have struggled hard and long for a decent livelihood. And the first one is this film here which I am going to bring up which was made by the Guardian, it's called the Fight, and it's about the struggle of disabled people in Bolivia about four years ago for a national pension. A pension of £56 a month which is 500 Bolivians. We have not time to watch the whole of, you have got the link there on this so you will be able to watch it all if you want to but I will start it off. I will describe it as we go as it's in Spanish. [*video playing*] a man probably with cerebral palsy wearing a nappy and nothing else, crawling along in front of police riot shields, behind him other men [inaudible] we're on a road with a minibus attached behind it are perhaps 20 people in wheelchairs. Other people walking along with walking aids ‑

GEMMA: Richard are you able to hear me? You need to mute the film, it's too hard for people to hear you while you're describing it. If you can describe it without the sound on that would be great.

RICHARD: The meeting in the layby. The goal is La Paz, the goal the very thing we want is 50 Bolivians a month pension for all disabled people. There's nothing else. They clap. Now the next day they are reassembling to get back on the road. They have taken down their tents. Going now a steep incline. From our vulnerability we get stronger says one. We're now looking back at the march, 4020 metre above sea level. Camping. Along goes the caravan they call it the caravan. We'll arrive in seat of Government from La Paz someone speaking in a wheelchair next to them a blind person with a guide dog. We'll arrive at seat they are marching now along the flat, even pushing themselves in their wheelchairs, the sign says to La Paz which is the capital. Strength, strength, brothers. Says Rosemarie. Go slowly no need to hurry, keep your rhythm. Slight incline, there's about 8 bands now they are joined by lots of other people lots of trade unions have joined them from La Paz, it's a large march now, several thousand people coming down into the city. "We're overwhelmed by the support", says one of the organisers, "there are so many people". After 35 days the caravan arrives in La Paz. We have some here for the 500 Bolivian pension for all disabled people. It's a large crowd and they are tired, really tired. "If a bed came by right now I would crawl in and sleep until tomorrow", that's one of the leaders. "Put this on it's cold you're going to get sick". So they erected their tents in a city square, but remember La Paz is high up in the Andes so it’s pretty cold. There's a meeting taking place with lots of people. I am going to move the film on a little bit now just to get another flavour of, now it's the next day and marchers find they are locked out of the Plaza Morillio which is where the Government buildings, large crash barriers have been erected and riot police all-round the square, and the protester are trying again to come up towards the barriers. One disabled person dragging a large cross, the fight is hard but we must go on. We're now up against the crash barriers, pushing at them, there are national TV cameras here to record what's going on. So this protest is not in vein, the whole country is seeing what's going on with disabled people versus riot police, riot police behind the barriers. We want to get into the Plaza Morillio, this is where our Government is. Throwing pepper spray through gaps in the fence into the eyes of the protesters. The map with the cross, the wooden cross is using it to try and push up the barriers. More pepper spray into people's eyes. So this gives you a flavour of this film. I am going to stop it there. I would jury people to have a look at it, it's a very powerful film and in the end it shows that there was solidarity there from the trade unions representing poorer people in the country, and others, other tactics they were suspending themselves from a high flyover in their wheelchairs. At one point police drove motorcycles through where they were sleeping and another point someone, we don't know who it was, whether it was an undercover agent or someone who hated them, drove their car over their tents and killed two people and injured seven who and there was then a funeral. In the end after two months, they stopped and the Government eventually having said they were there to bring down the President, said probably because of the deaths, that we will concede £28 a month, half 250 Bolivians to those who are severely disabled but they consider on the fight for more.

    Ok so that's that one, now we'll have a look at this film from the ILO about South Africa, and their struggle there.

>>: In South Africa, 7.5% of population live with a disability according to the 2011 census. The Government provides disability grant ‑

RICHARD: Oops sorry. Start that again. Sorry people.

>>: 7.5% of the population live with a disability. According to the 2011 census. The government provides a disability grant for all adults over 18. This is rare in sub‑Saharan Africa and given South African's status as middle‑income country. All grants are payable to citizens, permanent residents and refugees with legal status.

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    This grant is the only one available for persons of working age and also covers persons with chronic illnesses such at HIV/AIDS to access their grants, beneficiary of the disability grant use their smart card issued by Sassa which is the South Africa Social Security agency Sassa using the biometric system to registered beneficiary as well as their caregivers.

>>: Disability grants are one of our biggest challenges in sense that a lot of fraud is committed amongst that you would know that generally in unemployment is high and people need to access services they attempt to think of as disabled and some of the condition that they would bring forward like hypertension hypertension, a not necessarily make you disabled of course it's a chronic condition but if controlled through diet and exercise, of course you will be able to still work because many people in the open labour market are able to work with such condition. And I think we have put in a lot of measures in place in terms of quality control round the management of disabilities but more quality assurance on the technical nature in terms of where doctors have made assessments we would bring in independent doctors to be able to assess to assessments, to ensure that the person who is assessed accordingly is in fact disabled and is in fact eligible for the grant.

>>: There are three payment channels that beneficiaries can choose from. Namely, electronic bank transfer, cash payment at Sassa offices and various points of sale such a supermarkets. Catch payments at local offices are made during the first half of each month, while the electronic payments are available from the first day of each month. Caretakers can collect on behalf of those who are immobile due to chronic illness and disability..

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>>: The South African constitution acknowledges the need for protection of, and non‑discrimination against, persons with disabilities. It require the Government to offer assistance in the form of a disability grant. This grant contributes to improving the income security of 2.8 million people living with disabilities in South Africa. With this grant the Government of South Africa is taking an important step to building a national social protection floor in line with the ILO's recommendation 202 on national floors of social protection. To learn more about the recommendation, as well as social protection in South Africa ‑

RICHARD: Ok. So we go onto the chat activity which we will do in a moment, but we saw there different ways of actually trying to get a livelihood, self‑activity of disabled Bolivians and because of the involvement of the disability movement in the struggle for the Constitution post-apartheid in South Africa in the idea that all people should be treated equally, South Africa is in usual in African countries in introducing this disability grant so right first activity really which I would like you to do, is for disabled people how are the barriers to the means to live similar to other poor people in your country? Then the second thing you might want to think about at the same time, we'll leave the third one until later, how are the barriers for disabled people struggling to live different to those faced by other poor people in your country? So the first one is how are the barriers similar between disabled people and other poor people in your country, and the second one how are the barriers for disabled people who are poor, struggling to live, different to other poor people in your country. So if you would likely to take a minute to think about that, and then enter your point on 1 and 2, number them 1 and 2 in the chat Gemma will come and read them out, we'll maybe get one or two people to discuss. Thank you.

RICHARD: Ok. What are we getting in the chat Gemma, have we got anything yet?

GEMMA: People have started to put things in, just got a couple so far.

RICHARD: Let's wait another 30 seconds shall we.

RICHARD: Ok I think we'll start now. Can you start reading a few out for us please.

GEMMA: Ok. Our friend Joanne in New Zealand, good one to start with, similar, have to manage to find homes and if they do have to pay high rents leaving little income for other basics like food and power. What's different is we have a social welfare payment called supported living payment which disabled people can qualify, plus those on social welfare get extra money during the winter to help with power points. A lot of people have just answered 1, which basically poor unaffordable housing and the barriers stem from lack of financial and skill support which impact economic livelihood of all. Lack of employment opportunities affordable and comfortable homes and accessibility. Quite a lot of people have said it's the same for both disabled people and the poor in my country are finding needs of survival very difficult, feeding housing and jobs, both face similar barriers in access education in training for skills development. All disabled people are not listed in the social safety network. I will just whizz down a bit just to do with number 2 specifically, accessibility and lack of employment opportunities. Ok this a bit more ... based on the need and intersectional dimensions persons with disabilities are facing and employment livelihood barriers, struggling to get a job. Unorganised sectors and non‑governmental sectors are unwilling to give jobs. Visually impaired are more vulnerable ok. I think advent of capitalism, free market economy and lack of equal opportunity are the barriers that make the life of the poor and disabled more difficult. Number do preconceived notion of discriminatory attitude towards disability. Just going to whizz down again. In Rwanda, Nicodeme, there are programmes that aiming to support poor people by doing some work some core work but people with disabilities get the barriers to access that support. Because some are not able to do the provided com work based on the types of disabilities they have. Basic needs are not available, attitudinal barrier there's a lot more coming in now just bear with me a moment.

RICHARD: Ok. That Rwandan person, are they able to come on and say a bit more about that while you're looking at the other.

GEMMA: Nicodeme, are you able to unmute or turn your video on if you need to sign.

RICHARD: Hello Nicodeme?

GEMMA: Might need to ask him to unmute, just bear with me one moment....

RICHARD: No.

GEMMA: I'm not getting anything so far.

RICHARD: Read out some more. My comment on that would have been obviously the Rwandan Government needs to make that core work accessible to disabled people it has signed two convention it think it's important, that would be a key demand to make on the Government that core work should be open and adjusted the so that all disabled people can take part in it.

GEMMA: Most people are saying attitudinal barriers, main problem is attitude from different employers, they feel persons with disabilities can't do anything, so no jobs are given on such grounds. Some will else said attitudinal barrier, and again very similar lots of that, they feel that disabled people cannot perform. Here we go. Hi.

>>: Hi.

RICHARD: Tell us a bit more about the work programme in Rwanda and why disabled people can't get into it.

>>: Yeah, thank you very much, this is Nicodeme from Rwanda, there are some problems that aiming to support vulnerable people, poor people, of course including those families of people with disabilities but by getting that support, the selected people have to do some common works, like cleaning roads, but they are, when they are doing that common works they get payment to support their life but some people with disabilities do not benefits from those common works pacing on their types of disability for instance, if you have a physical disability and you are using wheelchair, you cannot participate in those common work. If you are people with albinism you cannot access those common work as you cannot spend much time in sun. So it is a challenges for people with disability to get what they need in living, however, they are some programme to support people poor people. That is what I have mentioned in the comment. Thank you.

RICHARD: Thank you. And as I said, it seemed to me that one of the key demands of the Rwandan disability movement should be that the disabled can take part equally in them. If I was living in Rwanda I would be making and campaigning round. Secondly, if there are certain jobs that can't be done they need to broaden the number of jobs where you get the core income so that people who for instance, looking after a car park or something else like that where if you were sedentary you could still get paid for doing, or being a watchman or other such things. Or watchwoman. All right, thank you. Let's have a few more then we must press on.

GEMMA: Are we still talking about numbers 1 and 2?

RICHARD: Let's do 3 as well. What 3 things would lead to greater equality in livelihood for disabled people in your country, what 3 things. While people are writing that up you can read out some of the ‑

GEMMA: No I can't because when I am reading the captioning is covering any ... so asking what three things would lead to greater quality.

RICHARD: In livelihood for disabled people in your country. Put it in the chat please. May need to mute people.

GEMMA: I am actually, I can't mute all because it means it's difficult but I am muting then when they do.

RICHARD: Three things that would lead to greater equality and livelihood for disabled people in your country.

GEMMA: Ok. End all forms of discrimination and misconceptions in the workplace, sorry, end all forms of misconceptions in the workplace, implement and enforce ratified treaties and acts dealing with work and livelihood. Improve on the affirmative action policies. Somebody else just said it very simply, mass sensitisation. Which I thought was great. Being women with deafblindness I can say that regarding employment it also needs to be safer and better type of, that's a question back though you Richard, what type of employment do you think is better self‑employment or formal employment. That back to the answers for number 3, inclusion alone is not enough, accessibility and SWMS, I am not sure what that means. Employment, Joanne in New Zealand, greater employment opportunities, more accessible housing welfare reforms, and inclusive education, access to employment, end all forms of discrimination that one, reasonable accommodation, governmental support, success stories of disabilities and widespread awareness. Organisations both public and private should have equality and diversity policies in place to support staff wits disability. Accessibility to quality education, disability funds should be set up by the Government so employers of disabled people could access such funds in support of their disabled staff. Three things, ensure safer among with accessible environment, take strict action against discrimination of persons with disabilities, and train young in mainstream to be sensitive with persons with disabilities, they are the future so only they can change it.

RICHARD: Some good answers there, we'll need to move on in a moment but I think people are all thinking in the right place on this, these issues now. It would seem to me most people there were talking about the attitudinal dimension and changing practices in the worker place and I think all of those things are easily changed, the physical access cost more money, but it often doesn't as we found out last week, cost anymore if you do it from the beginning it's when you have to retrofit going backwards, that it costs more. And that is a good reason to having employers in forums with disabled people, so that when they are going to open the new office and new factory and new workshop, that they think accessibility. I think that is a place where Government support and grants should come in, but there should be really building codes that are passed which implement the principles of the legislation, so that when it comes to workplaces there are codes of practice that have to be adhered to. And if those are agreed with the employers, which we can get employers such as Safaricom that we talked about in the presentation to agree they do that automatically in Kenya we found that out. So the right to work is an established human right and round the world disabled people are not in work with women more significantly affected. Disabled organisations need to be struggling for that right to work and so let's move on to the work side of things. Because many have already got there from what people were saying.

    So first of all we have got an interview with the specialised training and disability resource centre in Sri Lanka as it was set up the Employers the Federation of Ceylon as it was under British rule, the training centre has been going for the last 11 years and has run 25 course. Benefit of being part of Employers Federation Network over 700 companies, based at employers’ organisation. That is really something worth thinking subtitle because it means that employers come on board. There is now a global employers network that you can find out about in the course book. The opportunities afforded by the centre a multiple including employment opportunities for people with disabilities an additional training all these services are geared towards open labour market rather than the sheltered workshops, so let's hear what Manique Gunaratne says about this in this interview.

RICHARD: Very pleased to be talking with Manique Gunaratne who runs a centre for disabled people developing skills for employment in Sri Lanka, and she is going to contribute to our module on employment so the first question really, what is the position of disabled people in Sri Lanka as regards employment and self‑employment?

MANIQUE: In Sri Lanka people when you come to people with disabilities, we have the Government [inaudible] saying that 3% of Government reservation should be for people with disabilities. But when it comes to implementation there are gaps. I am working at the Employer's Federation of Ceylon when we have 700 plus employers so we have initiated the Employers Network on Disability, to provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the private sector. So we are doing a lot of awareness programme for employers, we are sense sensitising the employers on how to make an inclusive workplace, we're training people with disabilities to develop their employment skills, and then we do the proper job match. So if [inaudible] of people with disabilities in Sri Lanka according to statistics only about 21% are economically active. So we have to work more on it to give more opportunity opportunities for people with disabilities. People in very grass root level or in rural areas, they are mostly on doing the self‑employment, so we are you know doing programmes to up‑grade the self‑employment and to develop them into entrepreneurs with disabilities. Which is very important. So with livelihood activities and various other trainings and activities are done, to promote employment opportunities or develop entrepreneurs with disabilities to develop their skills, and be gainfully employed.

RICHARD: Very good, what do you think are the main barriers that lead to this only 21%, that's 79% not economically active of disabled people of working age, so what are the main barriers that they are up against in Sri Lankan society?

MANIQUE: When it comes to people with disabilities, they are lacking skills, lacking employment skills when they go for school and universities they develop their academic qualifications, but to be employed you must have the professional skills plus education level should be high as well you must have academic qualification, but you must have professional qualification. Because the work in private sector the language skills and the soft skills the technology skills is very important. So lack of knowledge in English, because people, people with disabilities come from the very grass root level, so one barrier is that the language barrier. Lack of knowledge in technology, lack of education level, employer [inaudible]

RICHARD: You work with 700 employers who presumably accept the case for disabled people working in their businesses, but are there other employers who have a negative attitude?

MANIQUE: [inaudible] changing attitude of the employers. So most of these companies they recruit people with disabilities but amongst them was company which have negative attitudes but we came into change mind set from sympathy to empathy and especially how to [inaudible] workplace and put more and more people with disabilities into their workforces.

RICHARD: We'll go on from that, so I think that [*background noise*] sympathy to empathy in other words moving from a charity model to a supportive model was really important. And there's more to that interview that you can watch when this comes around. Another example which is the model from Bangladesh, which was mainstream straining, sometimes thereafter specific training is for disabled people, but this one was the vocational training programme by Madhab [name] vocational training institute MMVTI in Bangladesh Involved more than 40,000 people being trained, provide specifically design vocational training in job placements for people with physical and sensory disabilities. A multidisciplinary team of therapist, social workers counsellors job coach other professionals help participants in choosing the vocational training course. There were 15 different course you could take, into consideration the trainee's physical and financial and educational preference. And the outcome, which was actually better than most, there's been a DFID study comparing these recently this one was one of the better ones. A study of the programme both pre‑and post using qualitative methods found improved employment outcomes with 60% of participants securing employment after training. That's much higher than you usually get on a training course. Interestingly the training programme was more successful in preparing women for employment than men, 71 compared to 53%. The study did not explore factors behind this gender difference. Participants who secured employment reported better wellbeing and quality of life outcomes. 74% reported they were able to provide a better livelihood for their families under 92% increased social acceptance, 83% reported improved overall life quality. Better awareness of disability and rights and support. By taking part, disabled people always do pose a challenge to others and that's what happened here.

    What was learnt from it? Found that vocational training can improve employment outcomes it also highlighted that training should match participants skills abilities and their financial resources, for instance, a participant who did sewing machine training but could not afford a sewing machine, so maybe there needed be to a grant there to provide them with a sewing machine or microfinance. This was one of the problems, it wasn't linked with microfinance a small grant and a low interest rate, that you can get the capital you need, or say studying shoe repair, you get the tools, and so on. Or sewing. Participants who took part in the computer training could not find a job because employers thought their educational background was too low even though they had skills on the computer. So the study identify the need for vocational training to work a long site other schemes, such as micro credit, as integration, and employers awareness training so that there's an undertaking when you run the course, that there are this many places of jobs that will be available at the end of it because I think training for training's sake without a destination has been shown to be ineffectual in many places round the world, what we need is a more integrate approach with employers offering trainee ships which will lead if people meet the minimum requirements to the offer of a permanent job, and more people in the more self‑employed sector, they need microfinance to get the equipment, whether it be a computer or a sewing machine or tools.

    Ok so now we're going to look at a film which compares Nigeria and Kenya in terms of employment. So let's have a look at what they have to say here.

    Seems to be problem getting this started.

    I will take it back to the beginning.

    No still bad beginning.

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RICHARD: Ok. So that's sort of raised some of the issues. Sarah do you want to take us through this one? The dos and the don'ts of employment.

SARAH: Yes Richard I can do that. The don'ts that we have in employment sometimes you don't, you are told don't assume that disabled people are unemployable, and the do is do learn where to contact and recruit disabled people from, then don't also assume that disabled people lack the necessary education and training for employment. Then you do you need to learn how to communicate with disabled people. Don't again assume that disabled people do not want to work, the do is that do ensure that your applications and other company forms do not ask disability related questions and that they are in.

RICHARD: Formats.

SARAH: Formats that are accessible to disabled people. Don't ask if a person had a disability during an employment interview. But do consider having written job description that identify the essential punishes of the job. Also don't assume that certain jobs are more suited to disabled people. Do ensure that requirements for medical examinations do not discriminate and eliminate disabled applicants. Don't assume that disabled people can't do a certain job. Do provide reasonable accommodations that the qualified applicant will need to compete for the job. Don't assume that your current management will need special training to learn how to work with disabled people. You should do treat disabled people the same way you would treat any applicant offer employee. Then don't assume that the cost of business insurance will increase as a result of hiring disabled people. Do relax and make the disabled applicant feel comfortable. Don't assume that the work employment will be unsafe if you employ disabled people or an employee sustains an impairment on the job. Do develop procedures for maintaining and protecting confidential medical records. Don't assume that the work environment will be unsafe if you employ disabled people or an employee sustains, ‑ I have already talked about that. Don't assume that reasonable accommodation are expensive. Don't make medical judgements. Do train supervision about how to make realistic accommodations in the workplace. Don't also assume that your workplace is accessible South African Human Rights Commission advice for employers. You need to make them accessible.

RICHARD: Very good. Now I am now going to show you an interview with Elizabeth Ombarti, that we heard on that previous film but you did a whole interview with her. Do you want to say something about the context of Kenya us beforehand in terms of employment before we go into the film.

SARAH: I would like to say that as far as employment is concerned in Kenya, there is there is provision by Government through our constitution that every institution is supposed to have at least 5% of their appointed or elected or employable positions for persons with disabilities, which has not been achieved in many sectors, both the public sector and the private sector. But we also know that there are programmes that have been put in place, like by the Government, for example [*Kenyan name*] meaning work for youth, work for the youth, which incorporates persons with disabilities who can be able to do those works which mainly manual labour, mainly manual labour which some types of disability cannot accommodate such kind of works so we're saying that Kenya even through the programmes it has been able to ensure that persons with disabilities are include, there's a programme by the united disabled persons of Kenya on inclusive employment where we have shared much in the module you will learn more about it when you go through the module but there is a project where the United disabled people of Kenya are trying to give capacity on soft skills and hard skills so that persons with disabilities are both employable and have skills to even do businesses and do their own works.

RICHARD: Ok we'll get on to the film now.

SARAH: We'll now get to the film where Elizabeth is talking about situation of work in Kenya.

SARAH: Hello everyone, I want to welcome you to a video from Kenya, on the status of employment especially towards persons with disabilities, and we're going to interview one Elizabeth Ombarti who I want to welcome now to introduce herself. Elizabeth, over to you.

ELIZABETH: Thank you Sarah, my name is Elizabeth Ombarti I am a woman with a psychosocial disability, and currently I work as an OPD engagement officer in a project called Inclusion Works. Inclusion Works is a UK Government funded programme in four countries, Uganda, Nigeria, Kenya and Bangladesh whose focus is on how persons with disabilities are included in access for more wage [inaudible].

SARAH: Thank you Elizabeth ‑

RICHARD: What's happened ...

ELIZABETH: Thank you Sarah my name is Elizabeth Ombarti I am a woman with a psycho ... Bangladesh who focus is on how persons with disabilities are included in or access for more waged employment I am happy to be here today.

SARAH: Thank you Elizabeth, to start us off I would like you to tell us what is the position of disabled people in Kenya, as regards to employment and both formal and informal employment, pre‑ and post‑COVID status please.

ELIZABETH: Thank you Sarah, it's known even through studies that many persons with disabilities are in the informal sector they were hugely affected in the pandemic, and even now as we're trying to build back better, and studies have shown that one study shows that in Kenya 68% of persons with disabilities reported not being to work, where 65% felt insecurity in their current jobs. One key recommendation that keeps coming up is that people with disabilities and their families need targeted support around their income or loss of employment, or business, therefore governments should ensure benefits are accessible to persons with disabilities and in some cases also provide direct support for the relaunching of their businesses. Thank you.

SARAH: Thank you for that. What are the main barriers to equal employment according to your view?

ELIZABETH: Ok. So the main barriers, there are many more but we just need 3, so there's the issue of physical inaccessibility so we have many people with disabilities being hindered from getting to work due to inaccessible physical environments you had also inaccessible public transport that makes is really hard for persons with disabilities to access workplaces, which affects the outcomes of work and employment. We also look at barriers to do with accessing quality education where you find that a huge percentage of persons with disabilities is not accessing quality education also affecting the outcome in terms of accessing work in the open labour market. And also lastly when we don't have a forecast on ensuring reasonable accommodation that persons with disabilities in the workplace, which also you know is a barrier, it cause us a barrier in how persons with disabilities can access but also retain work you know in the open labour market.

RICHARD: I will have to move it on from that to our last chat session, so what are the main barriers to disabled people in getting to employment in low and middle‑income countries and what should Government do to aim proof employment position of disabled people. If you could answer one or other of those in the chat, just to get your views on that. What are the main barriers to disabled people getting into employment, in low and middle‑income countries if you don't know about all the countries just put for your country what should Government do to improve employment position of disabled people in your country so number these 4 and 5.

RICHARD: So main barriers to disabled people getting into employment in your country, and what is should Government do to improve the position. Number 5.

GEMMA: Ok, most it's a lot of discrimination, so lack of career guidance as discrimination, accessibility in terms of transport and workplace, discrimination for opportunities and lack of support, lack of disability sensitisation, actually the ok this is number 5 actually, Government need more work with NGO and DPOs to build strong hand for persons with disabilities. Environmental and attitudinal barrier at the workplace, lack of job specific skills training and barriers of access to physical environment. Inaccessibility. Lack of accessibility to public and private structure, transport facilities, inaccessibility again, accessibility everywhere. As regards to number 5, sensitisation campaign, accessible transport, employment programmes, promote inclusive education, work with employers and businesses, building codes to cater for disabled people, promote inclusive environment, campaign on hiring disabled people, tax exception for hiring disabled people, sensitisation again number 5.

RICHARD: Ok I mean what's interesting now about what everybody is saying is that you are all putting social model solutions forward. Nobody is talking about changed in person or the problem being in the person, I think that's we're moving forward on the course that people are seeing things in this way. Just going to show a minute of this a participated on the course who wrote in at set.

>>: Hello, thank you for this opportunity my name Is Laurie, I live in the UK, and I have been asked to talk a little bit about autism and what support can help people because I have got Asperger’s syndrome, well I have got mild Asperger’s syndrome with obsessional anxiety and I have received support from an autism charity which helped me at work and I am lucky enough to have been able to work nearly 20 years now with some support. But my diagnosis has helped me to understand myself, and explain myself to managers and colleagues, because I am more confident than I was is still there it's a lifelong condition and what can help generally I believe is having more understanding of Asperger’s and autism in society and therefore more understanding in workplaces, and more funding for more autism specialist support people helping people like myself, and anyone on the spectrum who has got employment needs, who is able to work but might need some help in certain areas. Or like in a meeting they might need support in a meeting at work it might be ok to do the job most of the time but might need some help to have a meeting with the manager. So if it's more funding and more support people like I have had that would be beneficial. Because you might not have heard of it

RICHARD: Ok we'll stop there. We do welcome people who are on the course contacting us if you have got a short thing that you want to say then we welcome you coming and saying that. So we don't have time to do this as an activity, but this is what states should ensure that there is national legislation, that the public sector should lead by example, by hiring, provide financial incentives to employers, for workers to hire, tax incentives the quota system as well, provided that all disabled people get opportunities there, what we find in many quota systems, people take the people with the least impairment and then take the benefits. Make available advice on good practice and adaptive technology, public procurement policies and systems should include provision that encourage the above. Quotas should ensure they are implemented there's no point having a quota if it not implemented. Support entrepreneurship and microfinance from disabled people, we are just as capable of running our own businesses as anybody else. We should be given the chance of doing it. Job retention and return for those who acquire an impairment, support disabled people in shelter employment to benefit and enter the mainstream labour market, we don't want continuing sheltered workshops just as we don't want continuing special schools we want them to be part of the mainstream. The state encourage employment in the private sector with employers, and we have had some good examples of that, from Sri Lanka and Kenya today. Mainstream technical vocational training, and that was an excellent example from Bangladesh that we had earlier. Ensure disaggregated data is available, robust monitoring and evaluation by Government so they know what the situation is out there with employers, and build intersectional and minorities, we need to be thinking about minorities and other groups who are disabled as well. Just to end Sarah will read out a few statements to give us hope as we move forward on our journey, but so Sarah.

SARAH: Thank you Richard. You can hear me?

RICHARD: Yes please go on.

SARAH: I will quote Franklin D Roosevelt saying that "We know that equality of individual ability has never existed and never will, but we do insist that equality of opportunity still must be sought".

RICHARD: He was, of course, a polio survivor himself.

SARAH: Ok. And we have Helen Keller who also quoted and say that "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence" .

    There is Barack Obama's quote that "People with disabilities deserve the chance to build a life for themselves in the community which they choose to live", and with all these quotes, I want to encourage all of to us fight for our rights, and to fight for inclusion so that we're not left out and we do the best when we get those opportunities to work and to do our businesses. Thank you.

RICHARD: And thank you. I will stop the share and just to say you can all put on your cameras if you likely to wave us goodbye. I am sorry we didn't have time for more comments but you're always welcome to send in video comments of your own, and we'll see if we can make a compilation to put those forwards, so if you can use zoom you can record yourself on your own on Zoom and make your comments, I would save the recording then send it in might be another way you can all participate in the course. If you have something important to say that is. But nice to see you all, I hope the other thing I will say we're now this is the end of the fifth module, we hope you are doing the work and I would urge you to now start sending in over the Easter break we want to see where we're up to on the follow up work that you're doing, and give you some feedback as well so thanks very much to all of you. Goodbye to you all. Thank you. Anyway thanks very much to all of you we'll see you next week bye‑bye.